



COSTA MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT

99 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California 92626
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~ PRESS RELEASE ~

Release Date: July 9, 2012
Time: 1000 a.m.

PIO: Lieutenant Tim Schennum
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Sergeant Cam Phillips
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Incident / DR#: 12-8138 / Shooting-Homicide

Date: July 8, 2012

Location: 2900 block of Redwood Ave.

Time: 6:25 p.m.

Victim:	Name: Female City of Residence: Costa Mesa Misc.: Name withheld pending notifications	Age: 45-years : Deceased
Arrestee:	Name: Wilhelm, Thomas Michael City of Residence: Costa Mesa Charges: 187 CPC, Murder	Age: 48-years Bail: \$1 mil.

Synopsis:

On July 8, 2012, at about 6:25 p.m., Costa Mesa Police responded to a report of a subject with a gun threatening his girlfriend inside the residence they shared, in the 2900 block of Redwood Avenue. As officers were responding, additional information was received that gunshots were heard. When officers arrived in the area they heard a single gunshot. They immediately entered the residence. Once inside, they found a 45 year old female in a bedroom, with gunshot wounds to her chest. She was treated at the scene initially by Costa Mesa Fire Paramedics and subsequently rushed to Western Medical Center where she was pronounced deceased.

In the backyard of the residence, officers encountered, detained, and subsequently arrested Thomas Michael Wilhelm in connection with the shooting. It was determined that Wilhelm and the victim lived together at the residence and had been involved in a relationship for approximately three years. The relationship had soured considerably over the past two years, primarily as a result of differences over a small business they both shared. It is believed that Wilhelm confronted the victim over those differences and a physical altercation ensued. Wilhelm produced a small caliber handgun and shot the victim several times (that handgun was recovered by officers). Wilhelm then retreated into another area of the residence and is believed to have made an attempt to take his own life with a shotgun, which may have misfired—thought to be the gunshot heard by arriving officers. Wilhelm was not injured, and was contacted by officers prior to any further attempts to shoot himself or perhaps someone else.

Thomas Michael Wilhelm was booked for murder at the Costa Mesa Jail, and later transported to the Orange County Jail. His bail is set at \$1 mil.

Anyone with information that may pertain to the investigation of this tragic murder is encouraged to contact the CMPD Detective Investigations Unit at (714) 754-5205.

There is no additional information for release at this time.

A booking photo of Wilhelm is below.



Thomas Michael Wilhelm

Supervisor Writing / Approving Release: Lt. Paul Dondero / Tim Schennum